

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (withdrawn) A transgenic plant comprising in its genome a transgene encoding a member FLC gene family, the transgenic plant having early timing of its flowering compared to non-transgenic plants of the same species.

2. (withdrawn) A transgenic plant as claimed in claim 1 wherein the transgenic plant flowers earlier than non-transgenic plants of the same species.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (withdrawn) A transgenic plant as claimed in claim 1 wherein the member of the FLC gene family is selected from the group consisting of FLC1, FLC2 and FLC3 from *Arabidopsis thaliana* and BrFLC1A and BrFLC1B from *Brassica rapa*.

5. (withdrawn) Seed of the transgenic plant of claim 1.

6. (withdrawn) A seed for a transgenic plant, the seed comprising in its genome a transgene comprising a plant expressible promoter and an antisense coding region complementary to a protein coding region for a plant FLC protein, the plant FLC protein (i) having a MADS box domain, (ii) being at least 40% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC1 or the FLC2 protein from *Arabidopsis*, SEQ ID NO:2 or SEQ ID NO:4, outside of the region of the MADS box domain, and (iii) effective when expressed in transgenic plants to cause a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant as compared to a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background.

7. (withdrawn) A plant grown from the seed of claim.

8. (withdrawn) A seed as claimed in claim 6 wherein the FLC protein is at least 50% identical to the amino acid sequence of the FLC1 gene outside of the MADS box domain.

9. (withdrawn) A seed for a transgenic plant comprising in its genome a transgene comprising a plant expressible promoter and sequence complementary to a protein coding region for a member of the FLC family of proteins, the member of the FLC family of proteins being phylogenically more related to the FLC1 or the FLC2 protein from *Arabidopsis thaliana* than to any other MADS box domain protein from *Arabidopsis thaliana*.

10. (withdrawn) A transgenic plant cultivated from the seed of claim 9.

11. (withdrawn) A seed for a transgenic plant, the seed comprising in its genome a transgene comprising a plant expressible promoter operable connected to a sequence encoding the complement to a sufficient portion of a protein coding region for a plant FLC protein to lower the level of endogenous FLC protein activity in a plant grown from the seed, the plant FLC protein (i) having a MADS box domain, (ii) being at least 40% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC1 or the FLC2 protein from *Arabidopsis*, SEQ ID NO:2 and SEQ ID NO:4, outside of the region of the MADS box domain, and (iii) effective when expressed in transgenic plants to cause a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant as compared to a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background.

12. - 13. (Cancelled)

14. (withdrawn) A genetic construction comprising a plant expressible promoter operably connected to a sequence complementary to a protein coding sequence for a protein of the FLC gene family, the plant FLC protein (i) having a MADS box domain, (ii) being at least 40% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC1 (SEQ ID NO:2) or the FLC2 (SEQ ID NO:4) protein from *Arabidopsis*, and (iii) effective when expressed in transgenic plants to cause a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant as compared to a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background.

15. (withdrawn) A plant comprising in its genome the genetic construction of claim 14.

16. (withdrawn) A genetic construction as claimed in claim 14 wherein the FLC protein is selected from the group consisting of FLC1, FLC2 and FLC3 from *Arabidopsis thaliana* and BrFLC1A and BrFLC1B from *Brassica rapa*.

17. (withdrawn) A genetic construction as claimed in claim 14 wherein the plant FLC gene is at least 50% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC1 protein from *Arabidopsis*, SEQ ID NO:1.

18. (withdrawn) A genetic construction comprising a plant expressible promoter operably connected to sequence sufficiently complementary to a protein coding sequence for a protein of the FLC gene family so as to lower the activity of the FLC protein in a transgenic plant, the plant FLC protein (i) having a MADS box domain, (ii) being at least 40% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC1 protein from *Arabidopsis*, SEQ ID NO:1, and (iii) effective when expressed in transgenic plants to cause a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant as compared to a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background.

19. (withdrawn) A transgenic plant comprising a transgene for a member of the FLC gene family wherein flower initiation in the genetically modified plant occurs at least about 7 days before flower initiation in a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background without the transgene while being grown under the same conditions.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (new) A transgenic plant comprising in its genome a transgene encoding a Flowering Locus C2 (FLC2) gene, wherein expression of the transgene causes a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant compared to non-transgenic plants of the same species.

22. (new) A seed of the transgenic plant of claim 21.

23. (new) A seed for a transgenic plant, the seed comprising in its genome a transgene comprising a plant expressible promoter and an antisense coding region complementary to a protein coding region for a plant Flowering Locus C2 (FLC2) protein, the plant FLC2 protein (i) having a MADS box domain, (ii) being at least 50% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC2 protein, SEQ ID NO:4, outside of the region of the MADS box domain, and (iii) effective when expressed in transgenic plants to cause a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant as compared to a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background.

24. (new) A plant grown from the seed of claim 23.

25. (new) An isolated nucleotide sequence comprising the coding sequence for the FLC2 gene, wherein the sequence is defined by SEQ ID NO:3.

26. (new) An isolated DNA sequence comprising a DNA sequence encoding the FLC2 protein, wherein the sequence is defined by SEQ ID NO:4.

27. (new) A genetic construction comprising a plant expressible promoter operably connected to a protein coding sequence for a protein of the Flowering Locus C2 (FLC2) gene, the plant FLC2 protein (i) having a MADS box domain, (ii) being at least 50% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC2 (SEQ ID NO:4) protein, and (iii) effective when expressed in transgenic plants to cause a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant as compared to a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background.

28. (new) A plant comprising in its genome the genetic construction of claim 27.

29. (new) A transgenic plant comprising a transgene encoding a member of the plant Flowering Locus C2 FLC2 protein, the plant FLC2 protein (i) having a MADS box domain, (ii) being at least 50% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC2 (SEQ ID NO:4) protein, and (iii) effective when expressed in transgenic plants to cause a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant as compared to a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background.

30. (new) A method of producing a transgenic plant with altered flowering characteristics comprising: contacting a plant cell with a transgene comprising a plant expressible promoter and a protein coding sequence encoding a plant Flowering Locus C2 (FLC2) gene protein, the plant FLC2 protein (i) having a MADS box domain, (ii) being at least 50% identical in amino acid sequence to the FLC2 (SEQ ID NO:4) protein, and (iii) effective when expressed in transgenic plants to cause a delay in the onset of flowering in the transgenic plant as compared to a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background; identifying a plant cell carrying the inserted transgene; regenerating a transgenic plant from the plant cell, wherein the transgenic plant exhibits at least about 10% more leaves than a non-transgenic plant of the same genetic background without the transgene, wherein the number of leaves is determined when the transgenic plant and the non-transgenic plant are being grown under the same conditions.